

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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Dear Readers:

The issue of racial profiling (i.e., initiating a traffic or investigative contact based primarily on the race/ethnicity of the individual) has been prominently reported by the press in recent years. In an effort to determine whether California Highway Patrol (CHP) contacts with the public were reflective of persons using California roadways, the Department voluntarily began gathering demographic gender, age, and ethnicity data on a statewide basis starting in July 1999.

As Commissioner, I pledge that the CHP will not condone disparate treatment of the public on the basis of race or any other factor. CHP officers are carefully trained to treat all individuals equitably. All CHP officers take an oath of allegiance when hired, as well as ascribe to the CHP Code of Honor which states that officers will enforce the law without fear, favor, or discrimination. Further, we have an ongoing culturally diversified training program at all levels which focuses on, and promotes, the highest moral and ethical ideals. The results of this data collection effort validate my belief the CHP treats people equitably and does not engage in racial profiling.

This first report, of a three-year series, contains information about the Department's mission and policy and procedures designed to improve traffic safety and assist the motoring public. It also describes the CHP's initial efforts to quantify the composition of traffic stops made between July 1999 and April 2000. Additionally, the report contains demographic data from 16 other California law enforcement agencies.

I am pleased to share these results with the public and will continue to reinforce the message that racial profiling is an unacceptable practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. O. Helmick".

D. O. HELMICK
Commissioner